many of the ryots to pay their kists. The Government had in consequence to allow the collection of the kist to stand over till the current year.

As promised at the last meeting of the Assembly I paid a visit to the High Range and Peermade. I had the pleasure of meeting the various Planting Agencies, both European and Native, and studying their needs and requirements on the spot. A conference was held at Cumbam at which a large number of influential cardamom ryots were present. As a result of the conference His Highness the Maha Rajah has been pleased to sanction several measures which are likely to improve the position and prospects of the cardamom ryots. Full proprietary rights were granted to the holders in their cardamom holdings; they were allowed to pay the upset price of Rs. 10 per acre in 10 yearly instalments; the assessment was reduced from Rs. 6¼ per acre to Rs. 2; a sum of Rs. 10,000 was sanctioned for the purpose of opening out-let roads; the period of 3 years for which the assessment of one rupee per acre was levied was extended to 4 years; and several other minor concessions were also granted. Government hope that these liberal concessions will induce the ryots to bring fresh lands under Cardamom cultivation and to settle down on the Hills. At the request of the Kannan Devan Planters' Association, a grant of Rs. 100 a month was sanctioned for the Yellapatty Dispensary.

Tea.—The outturn of tea has largely increased, being over 7¾ million lbs. against nearly 6 million lbs. in the last year.

New Products.— Several applications for the cultivation of new varieties of cotton and rubber have been received and are under consideration.

14. **Public Works.**—In connection with the re-organisation of the Accounts system of the whole State, the P. W. Accounts Establishment, which had been under the control of the Chief Engineer, was transferred to the Central Account and Audit Office in the latter half of the year. This arrangement it is hoped would enable the Chief Engineer to pay more attention to the projecting and carrying out of public works required for the development of the country.

Another important change effected during the year was the transfer, to the Civil Departments concerned, of the maintenance of buildings and construction of petty works costing below Rs. 500. These works require little or no professional skill and it is unnecessary to burden the P. W. D. with them. It is reported that the new arrangement has already "relieved the P. W. D. staff of a large amount of worry and correspondence with other Departments".

The total expenditure incurred during the year amounted to Rs. 20,62,119 and was distributed as follows:—

Expenditure on actual works *i. e.*, under the usual Service heads of "Buildings," "Communications;" "Miscellaneous Public Improvements" and "Irrigation"	Rs.	17,28,375
Establishment	,,	2,40,562
Tools and Plant	,,	73,053
Suspense items	,,	20,129

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The expenditure on works amounted to Rs. 17,28,375—Rs. 11,29,556 on ordinary public works and Rs. 5,98,890 on reproductive works *i. e.*, the Kodayar Project. It was distributed over the several P. W. D. Divisions thus:

Division.	*Expenditure.* Rs.
Muvattupula.	2,14,461.
Kottayam	1,32,981.
Quilon	2,23,695.
Trivandrum	3,28,456.
Head Quarters	47,913.
Southern	1,44,328.
Kodayar Project	6,36,541.

Under the head of "Buildings", the construction of a Physical Laboratory for His Highness the Maha Rajah's College may be mentioned as an important work sanctioned. Some of the works which were in progress in the preceding year, for instance the English High School at Parur, the Dispensary at Changanacherry, the north and south wings of His Highness the Maha Rajah's College, Trivandrum, and two close prison blocks for the Central Prison were completed and handed over for occupation.

Under the main service heads, the highest outlay incurred, about Rs. 8,20,000, was on "Communications". Rs. 79, 564 were spent on the Northern Outlet road from the High Range which is being constructed by the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company. This with the expenditure previously incurred, makes up a total sum of Rs. 3,08,530 against the contribution of 4½ lakhs of rupees promised by His Highness' Government. Out of the total length of 40 miles of the road, 28½ miles have been completed and handed over by the Company. The Vaikam--Udayamperur road which was commenced a few years ago is said to be nearing completion, the expenditure incurred on it up to the end of the year being Rs. 53,063 against an estimate of Rs. 77, 840. The Kottayam--Kumili road has been re-metalled up to near Mundakayom and all the wooden bridges except one, up to Periyar on the line, are reported to have been replaced by iron or masonry structures.

The Chief Engineer says that "a very large amount of work was done in the way of replacing old bridges, mostly wooden ones, by more substantial structures" on other roads also *i. e.*,

(1) Iron girder bridge, 9th mile Alwaye to Perumbavur road.
(2) Bridge, 5th mile Do. Do.
(3) Do. 4th mile, Alwaye to Edapally road.
(4) Do. 123rd mile, Main Central road.
(5) Iron platform bridge on the 6th mile, Western Frontier road.
(6) Renewing the truss bridge on the 7th mile Palakozha to Piravom road.
(7) Bridge 5th mile, Ettumanur--Lalam road.
(8) Do. 1st mile, Mavelikara to Trikunnapula road.
(9) Bridge across the Palace canal at Alleppey.
(10) Bridges on the Ayur to Kulathupula road.

The canal extension from Kalpalakadavu to Tiruvallam commenced in the year 1077 also made fair progress.

The Chief Engineer gives the length of cart roads maintained by the Department during the year at 2,192 miles including 307 miles of Planters' roads. In

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

addition to these cart roads 362 miles of traces, 780 miles of village roads and 154 miles of canals and backwaters were maintained by the Department.

Under the head of "Miscellaneous Public Improvements" may be mentioned the construction of drains and other works for the improvement of drainage in and about the Fort in the Capital.

Under "ordinary irrigation works" may be mentioned the reconstruction of the damaged wings and other repairs connected with the Kumari dam in the Palayar river.

Kodayar Project.—With the expenditure incurred during the year, the Kodayar Project has cost Rs. 36,43,670. Three-fourths of the concrete work of the main dam and the Left Bank Head Sluices were completed while the Right Bank Head Sluices were nearly so at the close of the year. Water was let down the Left Bank Channel in the month of June last but unfortunately there were serious slips in more than one place. It is feared that the strengthening and in some places reconstructing the bank will involve additional heavy expenditure. This was a great disappointment to the Government and to the ryots who were in hopes that the supply in the existing channels would be augmented and a continuous flow maintained for the irrigation of Nanjinad and Edanad. The present Chief Engineer is engaged in investigating the best means of placing the channel in a safe and fit condition to take the required quantity of water to the Puthen Dam. Government have issued instructions that all progress on the new Tovala channel should be stopped until the supply of water from the Reservoir to the Puthen Dam is assured.

New lines of communications in North and Central Travancore and the improvement of existing lines are under consideration. As a beginning the construction of a road from Tiruvella to Pulikil has been already sanctioned. The bridging of the streams on the Main Central road where no bridges have yet been provided has also been engaging the consideration of Government. There are five streams remaining to be bridged—the Periyar and Muvattupula rivers on the 148th and 131st miles respectively and the Rani Manimala and Varattar between the 75th and 79th miles of the road. The cost of a bridge across the Periyar river will be enormous and it is considered that the ferry maintained at the crossing would fully meet the traffic which is inconsiderable. The remaining four bridges are roughly estimated to cost 3½ lakhs of rupees. The Government must have some return for the heavy initial outlay required for the construction of these bridges and the annual cost of their up-keep in the future. It is therefore proposed to levy a light toll at these bridges when they are completed and thrown open to traffic. The matter will be further considered on receipt of the statistics of traffic at the crossings and the detailed estimates for the bridges which have been called for from the Chief Engineer.

The question of a steam-boat service between Trivandrum and Alleppey is still under consideration, but before finally deciding the question, reliable data regarding the cost of the improvements required to the whole line of water communication between Trivandrum and Alleppey have to be obtained. A new Sub-division termed "the Canal and Backwater Sub-division" has been now formed in view to dealing with the question of the improvements needed and it is hoped that the Government will be soon in possession of the necessary information to arrive at a decision in the matter.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Marahmat Department.—The expenditure incurred by the Marahmat Agencies was Rs. 3,94,998 and was distributed as follows:—

Communications	....	Rs.	17,915.
Buildings	....	,,	2,54,459.
Irrigation	....	,,	12,075.
Miscellaneous	....	,,	82,741.
Establishment	....	,,	27,808.

Under the head of "Communications" undertaken by the Marahmat Department during the year, the construction of the Perumala-Kandala road in the Cardamom District may be mentioned as the most important work.

The construction of the satroms at Suchindram and Police buildings at Oodumpanshola and Munaar are some of the important works under the head of "Buildings" which were in progress or completed during the year. The conversion of the old Taluk Cutcherry building at Ettumanur into a satrom was also sanctioned in the year.

Under the head "Miscellaneous" the following are some of the large works undertaken by the Marahmat Department:—

The restoration of the Teppakolem tanks at Padmanabhapuram, Parakkay and Tirupadisaram, the draining and cleaning of the Sreevarahom tank at the Capital and the Mullakkal tank at Alleppey and the improvement of the tank at Kadinankulam.

The completion of certain wells in the Southern Division partially sunk by private individuals and the construction of some new ones were also taken in hand by the Department.

Travancore Branch, S. I. Railway.—The Railway line from Shencottah to Punalore was opened on the 26th November 1904. Through communication was thus established between Tinnevelly and Quilon, affording greater facilities for traffic. The guaranteed interest paid by the State during the year amounted to Bh. Rs. 2,78,157–10–1, the rate of interest being $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

16. **Anchal.**—The number of Anchal offices remained the same as in the previous year *viz.* 150, while that of letter boxes rose from 179 to 185. Nearly 55 lakhs of covers, official and private, passed through the Anchal offices during the year. It is satisfactory to note that the Anchal Hundi system is becoming more and more popular, nearly 73,000 hundis having been issued during the year. To afford additional facilities to the public the postage on parcels was reduced from 4 to 3 chuckrams for the first 20 tolas and 2 chuckrams for every additional 20 tolas.

17. **Devaswoms.**—The management of the Devaswom Department which is one of the most important departments in the State and on which between 6 and 7 lakhs of rupees are annually spent was one of the subjects that received considerable attention during the year under report. Two measures of importance were adopted by Government which are calculated to remove the existing abuses and place the management of these ancient institutions on a satisfactory footing. You will doubtless have noticed from the several proceedings of Government recently published in the Gazette how complicated the question of purificatory ceremonies in temples has become, whether viewed from the standpoint of public finances or of private rights. Various issues have been raised, particularly

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